THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a)Yes Sir.

(b) The indo-German Consultative Group held its sixth annual meeting in New Delhi on November 1-2, 1997. The discussions identified inpediments to further cooperation between the two countries and suggested ways to overcome these. The Group also identified new initiatives to augment mutually beneficial exchanges. The issues discussed included promotion of trade and investment, Cooperation in the fields of science & technology with active industry involvement, education, culture and the media.

The Group also suggested the adoption by the two governments of an Indo-German Agenda 2000 and Beyond', consisting of specific measures to be pursued by the two countries in a medium and long term framework.

Political Appointments in Indian Missions Abroad

1729. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMACHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of mission heads who are career diplomats and those who are political appointees out of all our missions abroad;

(b) what are the names of the political appointees and their missions;

(c) what is the reason for the gradual decline in the number of the political appointees over the years; and

(d) what steps would be taken to inject more dynamism and professionalism in our missions aborad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) 93 Capitals have career diplomats heading the missions while there are 8 Missions with political appointees as their Heads.

(b) The following are the names of political appointees and their Missions (in alphabetical order of names of Capitals)

(1) Dr. Prabhakara Jha, Antananarivo
(2) Shri Salman Haidar, london
(3) Dr. Jaspal Singh, Maputo
(4) Shri L.C. Jain, pretoria
(5) Shri M.H. Ansari, Riyadh
(6) Shri Kushok Bakula, Ulan Bator
(7) Shri S.D. Muni, Vientiane
(8) Shri Naresh Chandra, Washington

(c) There has been no decline in the number of politically appointed Heads of Missions over the years.

(d) The overall performance of the Missions and the professionalism and dynamism of our officers serving abroad is a matter of continuous and ongoing evaluation within the Ministry. officers frequently undergo short term refresher and training courses to keep them up-to-date with the latest developments Wherever necessary, appropriate corrective measures are undertaken to maintain dynamism and professionalism in our Missions aborad.

Espionage by Satellite

1730. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that many satellites launched by the developed countries are engaged in espionage/surveillance activities on various countries;

(b) if so, whether any protest has been registered by Governments against threse activities;

(c) if so, when and the nature of protests registered; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?